| 1 | TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: |
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| 2 | The Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife to which was |
| 3 | referred Senate Bill No. 148 entitled "An act relating to environmental justice |
| 4 | in Vermont" respectfully reports that it has considered the same and |
| 5 | recommends that the House propose to the Senate that the bill be amended by |
| 6 | striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the |
| 7 | following: |
| 8 | Sec. 1. FINDINGS |
| 9 | The General Assembly finds that: |
| 10 | (1) According to American Journal of Public Health studies published in |
| 11 | 2014 and 2018 and affirmed by decades of research, Black, Indigenous, and |
| 12 | Persons of Color (BIPOC) and individuals with low income are |
| 13 | disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards and unsafe housing, |
| 14 | facing higher levels of air and water pollution, mold, lead, and pests. |
| 15 | (2) The cumulative impacts of environmental harms disproportionately |
| 16 | and adversely impact the health of BIPOC and communities with low income, |
| 17 | with climate change functioning as a threat multiplier. These disproportionate |
| 18 | adverse impacts are exacerbated by lack of access to affordable energy, healthy |
| 19 | food, green spaces, and other environmental benefits. |
| 20 | (3) Since 1994, Executive Order 12898 has required federal agencies to |
| 21 | make achieving environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and |

| 1 | addressing disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental |
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| 2 | effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and |
| 3 | populations with low incomes in the United States. |
| 4 | (4) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, |
| 5 | 30 percent of Vermont towns with high town household poverty have limited |
| 6 | access to grocery stores. In addition, a study conducted at the University of |
| 7 | Vermont showed that in Vermont, BIPOC individuals were twice as likely to |
| 8 | have trouble affording fresh food and to go hungry in a month than white |
| 9 | individuals. |
| 10 | (5) Inadequate transportation impedes job access, narrowing the scope |
| 11 | of jobs available to individuals with low income and potentially impacting job |
| 12 | performance. |
| 13 | (6) In 2020, the Center for American Progress found that 76 percent of |
| 14 | BIPOC individuals in Vermont live in "nature deprived" census tracts with a |
| 15 | higher proportion of natural areas lost to human activities than the Vermont |
| 16 | median. In contrast, 27 percent of white individuals live in these areas. |
| 17 | (7) The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that |
| 18 | systemic health and social inequities disproportionately increases the risk of |
| 19 | racial and ethnic minority groups becoming infected by and dying from |
| 20 | COVID-19. |

4/22/2022 - EMC - 08:19 AM

| 1 | (8) According to the Vermont Department of Health, inequities in access |
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| 2 | to and quality of health care, employment, and housing have contributed to |
| 3 | disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 among BIPOC Vermonters. |
| 4 | (9) An analysis by University of Vermont researchers found that mobile |
| 5 | homes are more likely than permanent structures to be located in a flood |
| 6 | hazard area. During Tropical Storm Irene, mobile parks and over 561 mobile |
| 7 | homes in Vermont were damaged or destroyed. Mobile homes make up 7.2 |
| 8 | percent of all housing units in Vermont and were approximately 40 percent of |
| 9 | sites affected by Tropical Storm Irene. |
| 10 | (10) A University of Vermont study reports that BIPOC individuals |
| 11 | were seven times more likely to have gone without heat in the past year, over |
| 12 | two times more likely to have trouble affording electricity, and seven times |
| 13 | less likely to own a solar panel than white Vermonters. |
| 14 | (11) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized Vermont's |
| 15 | deficiencies in addressing environmental justice concerns related to legacy |
| 16 | mining and mobile home park habitability, providing grants for these projects |
| 17 | in 1998 and 2005. |
| 18 | (12) Vermont State agencies receiving federal funds are subject to the |
| 19 | antidiscrimination requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. |

| I | (13) In response to the documented inadequacy of state and federal |
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| 2 | environmental and land use laws to protect vulnerable communities, increasing |
| 3 | numbers of states have adopted formal environmental justice laws and policies. |
| 4 | (14) At least 17 states have developed mapping tools to identify |
| 5 | environmentally overburdened communities and environmental health |
| 6 | disparities. |
| 7 | (15) The State of Vermont does not currently have a State-managed |
| 8 | mapping tool that clearly identifies environmentally overburdened |
| 9 | communities. |
| 10 | (16) The 1991 Principles of Environmental Justice adopted by The First |
| 11 | National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit demand the right |
| 12 | of all individuals to participate as equal partners at every level of decision |
| 13 | making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement, |
| 14 | and evaluation. |
| 15 | (17) Article VII of the Vermont Constitution establishes the government |
| 16 | as a vehicle for the common benefit, protection, and security of Vermonters |
| 17 | and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single set of persons |
| 18 | who are only a part of that community. This, coupled with Article I's |
| 19 | guarantee of equal rights to enjoying life, liberty, and safety, and Article IV's |
| 20 | assurance of timely justice for all, encourages political officials to identify how |

| 1 | particular communities may be unequally burdened or receive unequal |
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| 2 | protection under the law due to race, income, or geographic location. |
| 3 | (18) Lack of a clear environmental justice policy has resulted in a |
| 4 | piecemeal approach to understanding and addressing environmental justice in |
| 5 | Vermont and creates a barrier to establishing clear definitions, metrics, and |
| 6 | strategies to ensure meaningful engagement and more equitable distribution of |
| 7 | environmental benefits and burdens. |
| 8 | (19) It is the State of Vermont's responsibility to pursue environmental |
| 9 | justice for its residents and to ensure that its agencies do not contribute to |
| 10 | unfair distribution of environmental benefits to or environmental burdens on |
| 11 | low-income, limited-English proficient, and BIPOC communities. |
| 12 | Sec. 2. PURPOSE |
| 13 | The purpose of this act is to identify, reduce, and eliminate |
| 14 | environmental health disparities to improve the health and wellbeing of all |
| 15 | Vermont residents. |
| 16 | Sec. 3. 3 V.S.A. chapter 72 is added to read: |
| 17 | CHAPTER 72. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE |
| 18 | § 6001. DEFINITIONS |
| 19 | As used in this chapter: |
| 20 | (1) "Environmental benefits" means the assets and services that enhance |
| 21 | the capability of communities and individuals to function and flourish in |

| 1 | society. Examples of environmental benefits include access to a healthy |
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| 2 | environment and clean natural resources, including air, water, land, green |
| 3 | spaces, constructed playgrounds, and other outdoor recreational facilities and |
| 4 | venues; affordable clean renewable energy sources; public transportation; |
| 5 | fulfilling and dignified green jobs; healthy homes and buildings; health care; |
| 6 | nutritious food; Indigenous food and cultural resources; environmental |
| 7 | enforcement, and training and funding disbursed or administered by |
| 8 | governmental agencies. |
| 9 | (2) "Environmental burdens" means any significant impact to clean air, |
| 10 | water, and land, including any destruction, damage, or impairment of natural |
| 11 | resources resulting from intentional or reasonably foreseeable causes. |
| 12 | Examples of environmental burdens include climate change impacts; air and |
| 13 | water pollution; improper sewage disposal; improper handling of solid wastes |
| 14 | and other noxious substances; excessive noise; activities that limit access to |
| 15 | green spaces, nutritious food, Indigenous food or cultural resources, or |
| 16 | constructed outdoor playgrounds and other recreational facilities and venues; |
| 17 | inadequate remediation of pollution; reduction of groundwater levels; |
| 18 | increased flooding or stormwater flows; home and building health hazards, |
| 19 | including lead paint, lead plumbing, asbestos, and mold; and damage to inland |
| 20 | waterways and waterbodies, wetlands, forests, green spaces, or constructed |
| 21 | playgrounds or other outdoor recreational facilities and venues from private, |

| 1 | industrial, commercial, and government operations or other activity that |
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| 2 | contaminates or alters the quality of the environment and poses a risk to public |
| 3 | <u>health.</u> |
| 4 | (3) "Environmental justice" means all individuals are afforded equitable |
| 5 | access to and distribution of environmental benefits; equitable distribution of |
| 6 | environmental burdens; and fair and equitable treatment and meaningful |
| 7 | participation in decision-making processes, including the development, |
| 8 | implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and |
| 9 | policies. Environmental justice recognizes the particular needs of individuals |
| 10 | of every race, color, income, class, ability status, gender identity, sexual |
| 11 | orientation, national origin, ethnicity or ancestry, religious belief, or English |
| 12 | language proficiency level. Environmental justice redresses structural and |
| 13 | institutional racism, colonialism, and other systems of oppression that result in |
| 14 | the marginalization, degradation, disinvestment, and neglect of Black, |
| 15 | Indigenous, and Persons of Color. Environmental justice requires prioritizing |
| 16 | resources for community revitalization, ecological restoration, resilience |
| 17 | planning, and a just recovery to communities most affected by environmental |
| 18 | burdens and natural disasters. |
| 19 | (4) "Environmental justice focus population" means any census block |
| 20 | group in which: |

| 1 | (A) the annual median household income is not more than 80 percent |
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| 2 | of the State median household income; |
| 3 | (B) Persons of Color and Indigenous Peoples comprise at least six |
| 4 | percent or more of the population; or |
| 5 | (C) at least one percent or more of households have limited English |
| 6 | proficiency. |
| 7 | (5) "Limited English proficiency" means that a household does not have |
| 8 | a member 14 years or older who speaks English "very well" as defined by the |
| 9 | U.S. Census Bureau. |
| 10 | (6) "Meaningful participation" means that all individuals have the |
| 11 | opportunity to participate in energy, climate change, and environmental |
| 12 | decision making. Examples include needs assessments, planning, |
| 13 | implementation, permitting, compliance and enforcement, and evaluation. |
| 14 | Meaningful participation also integrates diverse knowledge systems, histories, |
| 15 | traditions, languages, and cultures of Indigenous communities in decision- |
| 16 | making processes. It requires that communities are enabled and |
| 17 | administratively assisted to participate fully through education and training. |
| 18 | Meaningful participation requires the State to operate in a transparent manner |
| 19 | with regard to opportunities for community input and also encourages the |
| 20 | development of environmental, energy, and climate change stewardship. |
| 21 | § 6002. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STATE POLICY |

| 1 | (a) It is the policy of the State of Vermont that no segment of the |
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| 2 | population of the State should, because of its racial, cultural, or economic |
| 3 | makeup, bear a disproportionate share of environmental burdens or be denied |
| 4 | an equitable share of environmental benefits. It is further the policy of the |
| 5 | State of Vermont to provide the opportunity for the meaningful participation of |
| 6 | all individuals, with particular attention to environmental justice focus |
| 7 | populations, in the development, implementation, or enforcement of any law, |
| 8 | regulation, or policy. |
| 9 | (b) This policy builds on federal guidelines contained in the Executive |
| 10 | Order of 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in |
| 11 | Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations" and three subsequent |
| 12 | executive orders by reflecting the needs specific to Vermont. The policy |
| 13 | integrates environmental justice considerations into State agency activities and |
| 14 | programs to reduce and eliminate environmental and health impact disparities |
| 15 | experienced by some of Vermont's communities. |
| 16 | (c) The following State agencies, departments, and bodies shall consider |
| 17 | cumulative environmental burdens, as defined by rule pursuant to subsection |
| 18 | 6003(a) of this title, and access to environmental benefits when making |
| 19 | decisions about the environment, energy, climate, and public health projects; |
| 20 | facilities and infrastructure; and associated funding: the Agencies of Natural |
| 21 | Resources, of Transportation, of Commerce and Community Development, of |

| 1 | Agriculture, Food and Markets, and of Education; the Public Utility |
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| 2 | Commission; the Natural Resources Board; and the Departments of Health, of |
| 3 | Public Safety, and of Public Service. |
| 4 | (d) On or before July 1, 2025, every State agency identified in subsection |
| 5 | (c) of this section shall create and adopt a community engagement plan that |
| 6 | describes how the agency will engage with environmental justice focus |
| 7 | populations as it evaluates new and existing activities and programs. |
| 8 | Community engagement plans shall align with the core principles developed |
| 9 | by the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee pursuant to subdivision |
| 10 | 6004(c)(3)(B) of this title and take into consideration the recommendations of |
| 11 | the Environmental Justice Advisory Council pursuant to subdivision |
| 12 | 6004(c)(2)(B) of this title. Each plan shall describe how the agency plans to |
| 13 | facilitate equitable participation and support meaningful and direct |
| 14 | involvement of environmental justice focus populations in compliance with |
| 15 | Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. |
| 16 | (e) Every State agency identified in subsection (c) of this section shall |
| 17 | submit an annual summary by January 15 to the Environmental Justice |
| 18 | Advisory Council established pursuant to subdivision 6004(a)(1)(A) of this |
| 19 | title, detailing all complaints alleging environmental justice issues or Title VI |
| 20 | violations and any agency action taken to resolve such complaints. The |
| 21 | Advisory Council shall provide any recommendations concerning those reports |

| 1 | within 60 days after receipt of the complaint summaries. Agencies shall |
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| 2 | consider the recommendations of the Advisory Council pursuant to subdivision |
| 3 | 6004(c)(2)(E) of this title and substantively respond in writing if an agency |
| 4 | chooses not to implement any of the recommendations, within 90 days after |
| 5 | receipt of the recommendations. |
| 6 | (f) The Agency of Natural Resources, in consultation with the |
| 7 | Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the Interagency Environmental |
| 8 | Justice Committee, shall review the definition of "environmental justice focus |
| 9 | population" at least every five years and recommend revisions to the General |
| 10 | Assembly to ensure the definition achieves the Environmental Justice State |
| 11 | Policy. |
| 12 | (g) On or before July 1, 2023, the Agency of Natural Resources, in |
| 13 | consultation with the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee and the |
| 14 | Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall issue guidance on how the |
| 15 | agencies, departments, and bodies listed in subsection (c) of this section shall |
| 16 | determine which investments provide environmental benefits to environmental |
| 17 | justice focus populations. A draft version of the guidance shall be released for |
| 18 | a 60-day public comment period before being finalized. |
| 19 | (h)(1) On or before January 15, 2024, all agencies, departments, and |
| 20 | bodies listed in subsection (c) of this section shall, in accordance with the |
| 21 | guidance document developed by the Agency of Natural Resources pursuant to |

| 1 | subsection (g) of this section, review the past three years and generate baseline |
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| 2 | spending reports that include: |
| 3 | (A) where investments were made, if any, and which geographic |
| 4 | areas, at the municipal level and census block group, where practicable, |
| 5 | received environmental benefits from those investments; and |
| 6 | (B) a description and quantification of the environmental benefits as |
| 7 | an outcome of the investment. |
| 8 | (2) The agencies, departments, and bodies shall publicly post the |
| 9 | baseline spending reports on their respective websites. |
| 10 | (i) On or before July 1, 2024, the agencies, departments, and bodies listed |
| 11 | in subsection (c) of this section shall invest proportionately in environmental |
| 12 | justice focus populations. |
| 13 | (j)(1) On or before July 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, all agencies, |
| 14 | departments, and bodies listed in subsection (c) of this section shall either |
| 15 | integrate the following information into existing annual spending reports or |
| 16 | issue annual spending reports that include: |
| 17 | (A) where investments were made and which geographic areas, at the |
| 18 | municipal level and census block group, where practicable, received |
| 19 | environmental benefits from those investments; and |
| 20 | (B) the percentage of overall environmental benefits from those |
| 21 | investments provided to environmental justice focus populations. |

| 1 | (2) The agencies, departments, and bodies shall publicly post the annual |
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| 2 | spending reports on their respective websites. |
| 3 | (k) On or before December 15, 2025, the Agency of Natural Resources |
| 4 | shall submit a report to the General Assembly describing whether the baseline |
| 5 | spending reports completed pursuant to subsection (h) of this section indicate if |
| 6 | any municipalities or portions of municipalities are routinely underserved with |
| 7 | respect to environmental benefits, taking into consideration whether those |
| 8 | areas receive, averaged across three years, a significantly lower percentage of |
| 9 | environmental benefits from State investments as compared to other |
| 10 | municipalities or portions of municipalities in the State. This report shall |
| 11 | include a recommendation as to whether a statutory definition of "underserved |
| 12 | community" and any other revisions to this chapter are necessary to best carry |
| 13 | out the Environmental Justice State Policy. |
| 14 | § 6003. RULEMAKING |
| 15 | (a) On or before July 1, 2024, the Agency of Natural Resources, in |
| 16 | consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and the |
| 17 | Interagency Environmental Justice Committee, shall adopt rules to: |
| 18 | (1) define cumulative environmental burdens; |
| 19 | (2) implement consideration of cumulative environmental burdens |
| 20 | within the Agency of Natural Resources; and |

| 1 | (3) inform how the public and the State agencies, departments, and |
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| 2 | bodies specified in subsection 6002(b) of this title implement the consideration |
| 3 | of cumulative environmental burdens and use the environmental justice |
| 4 | mapping tool. |
| 5 | (b) On or before July 1, 2025 and as appropriate thereafter, the Agencies of |
| 6 | Natural Resources, of Transportation, of Commerce and Community |
| 7 | Development, of Agriculture, Food and Markets, and of Education; the Public |
| 8 | <u>Utility Commission; the Natural Resources Board; and the Departments of</u> |
| 9 | Health, of Public Safety, and of Public Service, in consultation with the |
| 10 | Environmental Justice Advisory Council, shall adopt or amend policies and |
| 11 | procedures, plans, guidance, and rules, where applicable, to implement this |
| 12 | chapter. |
| 13 | (c)(1) Prior to drafting new rules required by this chapter, agencies shall |
| 14 | consult with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council to discuss the scope |
| 15 | and proposed content of rules to be developed. Agencies shall also submit |
| 16 | draft rulemaking concepts to the Advisory Council for review and comment. |
| 17 | Any proposed rule and draft Administrative Procedure Act filing forms shall |
| 18 | be provided to the Advisory Council not less than 45 days prior to submitting |
| 19 | the proposed rule or rules to the Interagency Committee on Administrative |
| 20 | Rules (ICAR). |

| 1 | (2) The Advisory Council shall vote and record individual members' |
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| 2 | support or objection to any proposed rule before it is submitted to ICAR. The |
| 3 | Advisory Council shall submit the results of their vote to both ICAR and the |
| 4 | Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR). |
| 5 | § 6004. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL AND |
| 6 | INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE |
| 7 | (a) Advisory Council and Interagency Committee. |
| 8 | (1) There is created: |
| 9 | (A) the Environmental Justice Advisory Council (Advisory Council) |
| 10 | to provide independent advice and recommendations to State agencies and the |
| 11 | General Assembly on matters relating to environmental justice, including the |
| 12 | integration of environmental justice principles into State programs, policies, |
| 13 | regulations, legislation, and activities; and |
| 14 | (B) the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee (Interagency |
| 15 | Committee) to guide and coordinate State agency implementation of the |
| 16 | Environmental Justice State Policy and provide recommendations to the |
| 17 | General Assembly for amending the definitions and protections set forth in this |
| 18 | chapter. |
| 19 | (2) Appointments to the groups created in this subsection shall be made |
| 20 | on or before December 15, 2022. |

| 1 | (3) Both the Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall |
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| 2 | consider and incorporate the Guiding Principles for a Just Transition developed |
| 3 | by the Just Transitions Subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council in their |
| 4 | work. |
| 5 | (b) Meetings. The Advisory Council and Interagency Committee shall |
| 6 | hold public hearings and each meet at least nine times per year, with at least |
| 7 | four meetings occurring jointly. Meetings may be held in person, remotely, or |
| 8 | in a hybrid format to facilitate maximum participation and shall be recorded |
| 9 | and publicly posted on the Secretary's website |
| 10 | (c) Duties. |
| 11 | (1) The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee shall jointly: |
| 12 | (A) consider and recommend to the General Assembly, on or before |
| 13 | December 1, 2023, amendments to the terminology, thresholds, and criteria of |
| 14 | the definition of environmental justice focus populations, including whether to |
| 15 | include populations more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in |
| 16 | response to environmental burdens; and |
| 17 | (B) examine existing data and studies on environmental justice and |
| 18 | consult with State, federal, and local agencies and affected communities |
| 19 | regarding the impact of current statutes, regulations, and policies on the |
| 20 | achievement of environmental justice. |
| 21 | (2) The Advisory Council shall: |

| 1 | (A) advise State agencies on environmental justice issues and on how |
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| 2 | to incorporate environmental justice into agency procedures and decision |
| 3 | making as required under subsection 6002(b) of this title and evaluate the |
| 4 | potential for environmental burdens or disproportionate impacts on |
| 5 | environmental justice focus populations as a result of State actions and the |
| 6 | potential for environmental benefits to environmental justice focus |
| 7 | populations; |
| 8 | (B) advise State agencies in the development of community |
| 9 | engagement plans; |
| 10 | (C) advise State agencies on the use of the environmental justice |
| 11 | mapping tool established pursuant to section 6005 of this title and on the |
| 12 | enhancement of meaningful participation, reduction of environmental burdens, |
| 13 | and equitable distribution of environmental benefits; |
| 14 | (D) review and provide feedback to the relevant State agency, |
| 15 | pursuant to subsection 6003(c) of this title, on any proposed rules for |
| 16 | implementing this chapter; and |
| 17 | (E) receive and review annual State agency summaries of complaints |
| 18 | alleging environmental justice issues, including Title VI complaints, and |
| 19 | suggest options or alternatives to State agencies for the resolution of systemic |
| 20 | issues raised in or by the complaints. |
| 21 | (3) The Interagency Committee shall: |

| 1 | (A) consult with the Agency of Natural Resources in the |
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| 2 | development of the guidance document required by in subsection 6002(f) of |
| 3 | this title on how to determine which investments provide environmental |
| 4 | benefits to environmental justice focus populations; and |
| 5 | (B) on or before July 1, 2023, develop, in consultation with the |
| 6 | Agency of Natural Resources and the Environmental Justice Advisory Council, |
| 7 | a set of core principles to guide and coordinate the development of the State |
| 8 | agency community engagement plans required under subsection 6002(c) of this |
| 9 | title. |
| 10 | (d) Membership. |
| 11 | (1) Advisory Council. Each member of the Advisory Council shall be |
| 12 | well informed regarding environmental justice principles and committed to |
| 13 | achieving environmental justice in Vermont and working collaboratively with |
| 14 | other members of the Council. To the greatest extent practicable, Advisory |
| 15 | Council members shall represent diversity in race, ethnicity, age, gender, urban |
| 16 | and rural areas, and different regions of the State. The Advisory Council shall |
| 17 | consist of the following 11 members, with a goal to have more than 50 percent |
| 18 | residing in environmental justice focus populations: |
| 19 | (A) the Director of Racial Equity or designee; |
| 20 | (B) one representative of municipal government, appointed by the |
| 21 | Committee on Committees; |

| 1 | (C) one representative who resides in a census block group that is |
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| 2 | designated as an environmental justice focus population, appointed by the |
| 3 | Speaker of the House; |
| 4 | (D) one representatives of social justice organizations, appointed by |
| 5 | the Committee on Committees; |
| 6 | (E) one representative of an organization working on food security |
| 7 | issues, appointed by the Speaker of the House; |
| 8 | (F) one representative of mobile home park issues, appointed by the |
| 9 | Committee on Committees; |
| 10 | (G) one representative of a State-recognized Native American Indian |
| 11 | tribe, recommended and appointed by the Vermont Commission on Native |
| 12 | American Affairs; |
| 13 | (H) one representative of immigrant communities in Vermont, |
| 14 | appointed by the Speaker of the House; |
| 15 | (I) one representative of a statewide environmental organization, |
| 16 | appointed by the Speaker of the House; |
| 17 | (J) the Executive Director of the Vermont Housing and Conservation |
| 18 | Board or designee; and |
| 19 | (K) the Chair of the Natural Resources Conservation Council or |
| 20 | designee. |

| 1 | (2) Interagency Committee. The Interagency Committee shall consist of |
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| 2 | the following 9 members: |
| 3 | (A) the Secretary of Administration or designee; |
| 4 | (B) the Secretary of Natural Resources or designee; |
| 5 | (C) the Secretary of Transportation or designee; |
| 6 | (D) the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development or |
| 7 | designee; |
| 8 | (E) the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee; |
| 9 | (F) the Commissioner of Health or designee; |
| 10 | (G) the Director of Emergency Management or designee; |
| 11 | (H) the Commissioner of Public Service or designee; and |
| 12 | (I) the Director of Racial Equity or designee. |
| 13 | (3) The Advisory Council and the Interagency Committee may each |
| 14 | elect two co-chairs. |
| 15 | (4) After initial appointments, all appointed members of the Advisory |
| 16 | Council shall serve six-year terms and serve until a successor is appointed. |
| 17 | The initial terms shall be staggered so that a third of the appointed members |
| 18 | shall serve a two-year term, another third of the appointed members shall serve |
| 19 | a four-year term, and the remaining members shall be appointed to a six-year |
| 20 | term. |

| 1 | (5) Vacancies of the Advisory Council shall be appointed in the same |
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| 2 | manner as original appointments. |
| 3 | (6) The Advisory Council shall have the administrative, technical, and |
| 4 | legal assistance of the Agency of Natural Resources. |
| 5 | (7) Members of the Advisory Council who are neither State nor |
| 6 | municipal employees and who are not otherwise compensated by their |
| 7 | employer shall be entitled to per diem compensation in the amount of \$200 and |
| 8 | reimbursement of expenses Members may accept funds from the federal |
| 9 | government, a political subdivision of the State, or a 501(c)(3) charitable |
| 10 | organization and may expend funds for purposes that are consistent with this |
| 11 | chapter. Any Council member who receives funds pursuant to this subdivision |
| 12 | shall report to the Secretary of Natural Resources and disclose the source of the |
| 13 | funds, the amount received, and the general purpose for which they were used. |
| 14 | The Secretary shall post this disclosure information on its website or on the |
| 15 | Advisory Council's own website if such a website exists. |
| 16 | § 6005. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MAPPING TOOL |
| 17 | (a) In consultation with the Environmental Justice Advisory Council and |
| 18 | the Interagency Environmental Justice Committee, the Agency of Natural |
| 19 | Resources shall determine indices and criteria to be included in a State |
| 20 | mapping tool to depict environmental justice focus populations and measure |

| 1 | environmental burdens at the smallest geographic level practicable. The |
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| 2 | Agency of Natural Resources shall maintain the mapping tool. |
| 3 | (b) The Agency of Natural Resources may cooperate and contract with |
| 4 | other states or private organizations when developing the mapping tool. The |
| 5 | mapping tool may incorporate federal environmental justice mapping tools, |
| 6 | such as EJSCREEN, as well as existing State mapping tools such as the |
| 7 | Vermont Social Vulnerability Index. |
| 8 | (c) On or before January 1, 2024, the mapping tool shall be available for |
| 9 | use by the public as well as by the State government. |
| 10 | Sec. 4. ANNUAL REPORT |
| 11 | Beginning on January 15, 2024, the agencies, departments, and bodies |
| 12 | listed in 3 V.S.A. § 6002(c) shall issue and publicly post an annual report |
| 13 | summarizing all actions taken to incorporate environmental justice into the |
| 14 | Agency's or Department's policies or determinations, rulemaking, permit |
| 15 | proceedings, or project review. |
| 16 | Sec. 5. APPROPRIATIONS |
| 17 | (a) There is appropriated the sum of \$500,000.00 in fiscal year 2023 from |
| 18 | the General Fund to the Agency of Natural Resources for the cost of |
| 19 | developing the mapping tool required in 3 V.S.A. § 6005 including any |
| 20 | necessary community outreach associated with calibrating and improving the |
| 21 | mapping tool. |

| 1 | (b) There is appropriated the sum of \$275,000.00 in fiscal year 2023 from |
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| 2 | the General Fund to the Agency of Natural Resources to: |
| 3 | (1) convert 0.5 position to 1 full-time Civil Rights and |
| 4 | Nondiscrimination Compliance Officer; and |
| 5 | (2) fund two new positions to assist in the implementation of the |
| 6 | environmental justice policy and support the Environmental Justice Advisory |
| 7 | Council. This shall fund an existing position in the Agency and a second |
| 8 | position which the Agency is authorized to repurpose from an existing vacant |
| 9 | position. |
| 10 | Sec. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE |
| 11 | This act shall take effect on passage. |
| 12 | |
| 13 | |
| 14 | |
| 15 | |
| 16 | |
| 17 | |
| 18 | (Committee vote:) |
| 19 | |
| 20 | Representative |
| 21 | FOR THE COMMITTEE |